Too much to handle right now

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Too much to handle right now

by orphan_account

Summary

Hannibal pushes will to the breaking point but instead of moulding him into a killer Will tries to take his own life.

Notes

This work is from a Hannibal Kinkmeme prompt.

See the end of the work for more notes

Chapter 1

The weather was cold, wet and dismal outside. Rain ran down the window. Will Graham sat in his armchair facing out the window, watching.

Thanksgiving was approaching yet again. Another year all by himself. No family to celebrate with. Never had one really, probably never will. After all who would want to put up with someone like him. He was certain no woman would hang around him long enough to start a family.

He felt miserable. Lost.

It was Sunday morning in Wolf Trap. And here he was wrapped in a cacoon of depression. Glass of whiskey in hand to try and numb the feeling. Turning into his father, he thought. He grimaced at the thought. The whiskey may not be providing the answer for the problems, but it was sure helping him forget them.

He sat contemplating his life. The choices he made and that were chosen for him. The life he believed he could never have. He wept to be able to have someone close to him.

Oh Alana he thought. Beatuiful sweet Alana. But even she had run from him. To unstable. She had no idea.

This experience was not so new to him but he fought the urges for as long as he could. Didn't want anyone to know exactly what he thought. How he felt about it all. Didn't need anymore attention for all the wrong reasons. He just wanted to be left alone, but he also wanted to be loved. How conflicting.

A tear trickled down his cheek. He couldn't stand it anymore. He even argued with himself about who he was and what he stood for now. Prying into the minds of killers and associating, so much he felt like they still lingered their years later. Taking a piece of him for themselves. He felt dangerous. Knew the world would be better off without him and so he made his choice.

He had affairs to set in order first though. Despite his love for his dogs, it was not enough this time. He knew Alana would take care of them. By the time she found out it would be too late. She would look after them when he was gone.

He wrote a brief note on his desk. Sitting there was his box of lures. He smiled to himself. He picked up the box and made towards the front door. He called the dogs with him, trudging out towards the car with them. He opened up the back and they all piled in thinking they were going on a hike as Will smirked to himself.

He was about to leave when he noticed Winston on the porch. Sitting there looking miserable at him.

"Winston…… Come on, here!" Will called.

Winston slowly climed down the steps and walked slowly through the rain towards Will. He opened the door to allow the dog to climb in. Winston jumped over and sat on the passengers seat looking at Will with expressive eyes.

“It’ll be fine Winston. “ Will said looking at the dog. Winston laid his paw on Will’s leg and let out a low whimper. Smart dog thought Will. But he was set in his ways now. He pulled out the driveway and made his way to Alana’s first.

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“Will?!” Alana said answering the door.

“Hey Alana. Sorry to just barge in.”

“No it’s fine what’s up?” She said looking him over. He looked exhausted. Jack probably pushing him too hard again. She wished he wouldn’t push him so hard he looked like he was about to break.

“I’ve been called away. Gotta leave for a few days to sort out a few things and I really needed someone to look after the dogs, but it’s so cold out I don’t want to leave them in the house by themselves.” He said hoping she would buy it.

“Oh…. Ummm yeah I can look after them. No problem.” She answered

“I’m really sorry for no notice I was just on my way through but if it’s too much I can arrange a kennel.”

“No. It’s fine Will. I would love to look after your dogs.” She answered earnestly.

“Thanks. I packed some food for them and everything else they need so you don’t have to worry about a thing Ok.” He answered. “I can pack it all in the shed for you if you want.”

“Thanks. That would be great. I’ll give you a hand.” She said.

“No it’s fine. I don’t want to impose any further on you.” He answered.

She watched him move to the back of the car and start unpacking everything. At least the weather had cleared up since this morning but it was odd she thought. There was something not quite right here.

“So what’s so urgent?” She asked.

Will looked up and shrugged his shoulders. “Just work related. You know.” He said trying to sound casual. “Look I’ve gotta run but I’ll call.” He said trying to get into the car as quickly as possible. He was on the verge of tears leaving his dogs. They meant the world to him. His family of strays always there for him, non judgemental. Better company than most people at times.

“Oh…Ok Will.” She said watching him getting into the car. “Have a safe trip.” She waved to him. He didn’t wave back. That was odd. Must have been in a real rush she thinks as she

walks into the back yard to fill the water bowls for the dogs and give them some food. She couldn't wait to play with Buster. He was her favourite always a character!

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He pulled up out the Front of Hannibal's house. Grabbed his box of lures and started to make his way to the front door. He knocked and wait.

"Will." Hannibal said opening the door. "What a pleasant surprise. Please come in."

"Thanks but it's just a quick stop. I wanted to give you this." He said holding out the box of lures to Hannibal. "As a thank you. And Thanksgiving."

Hannibal smiled at him. "Why thank you Will. You're a few days early for thanksgiving however." He answered. Looking Will over he smelled some whiskey and he had bags under his eyes again. He wondered if he had been sleep walking again too. Maybe even another low grade fever. The enciphilitis was certainly beginning to take his toll on him. Hannibal wondered how much longer Will could hold out. Allow Hannibal the time to craft him into the killer he knew him to be at heart. The one he denied his very existence too."

"Yeah….. I've been called away for a few days and I'm running late so I just wanted to drop it off and say thanks." He said starting to move backwards towards his car.

He looked rushed. Like he was expected somewhere Hannibal thought. "Have a safe journey. And Will."

Will looked up at Hannibal.

"I'm having a thanks giving day feast. I was hoping you would be able to join me." He said to Will.

Will shrugged his shoulders. "Maybe."

Maybe not Hannibal thought to himself as he watched Will climb into the car and reverse out the driveway without even a good bye. He must have been in quite the hurry to make him rude. Hannibal opened the box of lures and looked at them for a moment. He recognised some of them from the time he had spent in Will's house looking after his dogs while he was away. He picked one up and looked closer at it. Strange he thought. He racked his brains thinking of when he might have mentioned or let onto Will that he was interested in fishing. He pushed the thought aside and returned inside to resume his cooking.

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Will walked in the door. He was a mix of emotions right now. He walked straight into his bathroom and went for the medicine cabinet. He grabbed the bottle of sleeping pills walked back out to the lounge, making sure to grab the whiskey on the way. He unhooked his phone and switched off his mobile.

Nothing holding him back now he thought to himself. He uncapped the bottle, shook the pills into his hand and swallowed with a shot of whiskey straight from the bottle. And another

handful.

He wanted to do it properly. But he didn't want pain and suffering, just peace. Quiet.

He did not want to wake up in the psyche ward. He remembered the last time he was in that god forsaken place on an involuntary hold. Freaking night mare. Visiting the state hospital for the criminally insane was bad enough. Chilton fumbling around with him trying to get in his head to poke and prod.

No he just wanted out. He had enough and now he was finally being able to let go. He switched on the radio and half listened to the music softly playing. He was starting to feel drowsy. He rested his back against the couch and took another swig of whiskey.

He sat there contemplating his life and his traumatic events that had led him to this end. The room started to sway and he closed his eyes. Falling into the warm comfortable darkness. Knowing there would be no nightmares to wake him. No stag haunting him.

Hi head slipped and he rolled off the couch and crashed on the floor. He did not move. He was too far gone.

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It was only half an hour after Will left but Hannibal couldn't push the thought out of his head. Why a box of lures? Of all the things Will Graham could have given to him he brought him a box of fly fishing lures that were hand tied. It seemed strange to him.

He was chopping the celery when the phone rang. He looked over at the caller ID which showed Alana.

"Alana. How nice to hear from you" He answered.

"Hi Hannibal. I wanted to ask you a question?" She replied. She sounded concerned. Hannibal frowned. "It's about Will."

"Is this about his therapy?" He enquired.

"Well……. No, not really. It's just…… Just that…….. I don't know he seemed strange when I saw him this morning. Said he was called out and had to leave. He dropped off his dogs and…."

Hannibal cut in "He left his dogs with you." Somewhat shocked but something was dawning on him.

"Yeah… I'm just not sure he's alright at the moment….."

"Alana I have to go. I'll call you back." Hannibal cuts in. He hangs up the phone and tries to call Will. Straight to message bank.

He grabs his car keys and mobile while dialing Will's again. Again straight to message bank. He gets into his Bentley and begins travelling to Wolf Trap.

He can’t be he think to himself. Hannibal never picked him as the type. But all the signs are there. Why didn’t he see it sooner. He was too busy pushing him to make him into a killer he didn’t see the signs. Giving away possesions like the lures. Thanks giving. Damn. Hannibal thumps the steering wheel while driving. Anger getting the better of him. He hopes his wrong but he starts speeding towards Will’s hoping it’s all a mistake but knowing too well that it is likely not.

*

He arrives at Will’s in 40 minutes having broken the speed limit most of the way. He steps on the porch and goes to knock on the front door when it swings open. He steps inside. A stench of whiskey hits his nose and there, by the couch. A set of boots and jeans. He walks over and finds Will’s unconscious body on the floor. He kneels down and checks for a pulse while grabbing his mobile. He has a pulse but it is not strong. He looks around and sees the bottle of whiskey and sleeping pills. “Oh Will. I expected so much more from you.” He says while dialing for an ambulance.

He moves will onto the couch and into the recovery position. He ensures his airway is clear. He tries to rouse him but Will is unresponsive. Before Hannibal knows it the paramedics are on the front door step. “Over here. He has ingested a large amount of whiskey and sleeping pills.” He says to them as they enter.

Will is loaded onto the gurney and taken to the hospital with Hannibal following behind.

Didn't pick him for it

Chapter Summary

Arriving at the hospital.

By the time Hannibal had parked the car and tried to catch up to Will, he was being administered into the Emergency room for an emergency stomach pump. The paramedics had intubated him on the drive over. Will was on a gurney hooked up to a heart rate monitor and respirator. His heart rate was at 2 and respiration 13 Hannibal noted. Some tension eased as he noted his vital signs were just in normal range.

Just as he was watching a nurse tapped him on the shoulder. “The paramedics said you were the one who found him. Do you know what he has taken?” She asked him hurriedly.

“He’s consumed a large amount of alcohol and several Flurazepam.” He answered not looking at the nurse. As he was talking he saw Will’s finger twitch just a fraction.

“Are you family sir?” She asked.

“No. I’m his friend and his Psychiatrist.” He answered watching two nurses approaching Will to take him to the operating theatre for the Stomach pump procedure.

He went to walk after them to watch but the nurse grabbed his arm. “I’m sorry sir, but you can’t go with him. If you want to take a seat in the waiting area and I will let you know when he is finished. It should not be too long. His vital signs are promising.” She smiled weakly at him trying to be understanding but her tone brooked for no argument.

Hannibal turned and walked outside instead. Reaching for his phone to call Alana and fill her in on the details. Then he would have to call Jack and inform him. Will would be placed under a 72 hour involuntary psychiatric hold. Although he was more concerned how Will would be when he came too. He was sure that he would not take the news well and waking up in the hospital. He made an effort to end his life. While the Flurazepam was not highly dangerous on its own, after years of suicide attempts the makers of the drug engineered it so people would sleep it off. Mixing it with alcohol however was a different ball game.

He dialled Alana’s number. He was surprised when she almost immediately picked up.

“Hannibal!” She sounded distraught. “What’s happened?”

“Alana.” He spoke, staying calm and collected. “I’m at the hospital with Will. He is going to be alright….. He’s just in surgery”

“Surgery! What’s happened Hannibal?!” She was starting to border hysterical on the other end. Hannibal knew she would not take the news well, given their romantic interest in each other that neither had really acted upon. But still the feelings were there and they were clouding her rational thought at the moment as Hannibal knew. He had hoped she would act more professional. But maybe he could use this to his benefit.

“Alana. Will has tried to overdose.” He stated calmly.

“Where are you I’m coming right now!”

“We’re at John’s Hopkins in the emergency room.” Stated clearly again trying to get her to calm down over the phone.

“I’ll be there in 20.” She said. She hung up.

One down, one to go. Hannibal scrolled through his contacts and found Jack. He took in a deep breath considering how he was going to take losing his prize pony for a while. He smirked as he thought of what would be going through Jack’s head. Maybe he could manipulate him and use it to toy him further in making him feel like it was somehow his fault pushing Will too hard. No Jack would have detoured around that and just blamed instability or the alcohol most likely.

“Dr. Lecter.” Jack answered sounding bemused.

“Jack, I’m afraid our plans for dinner have been cancelled. I’m at John Hopkins with Will. He has tried an attempt in overdosing himself on Flurazepam. He will be out of the field for three days at least.” Hannibal spoke coolly.

“Will……. Wait what?! Will tried to commit suicide. Will? I picked him for a lot of thins but not this” Ah so Jack is not the only one surprised by this new action that Will has taken upon himself.

“He attempted suicide Jack.” Hannibal spoke.

“How do you know? Who found him?” Jack asked sounding somewhat defensive. Hannibal is curious as to how Jack will try to intervene. He knew he would want Will back out in the field, but it could have also been to shift the blame from himself possibly.

“He gave a gift to me. Some of his prized lures. Alana rang shortly after he left, she was concerned about his behaviour, said it was unusual for him to bring the dogs to her place. I became concerned and tried to call him. The holidays always bring out the bad memories and by the time I realized that Will was giving away his prized possessions I went to his house and found him unconscious on the floor. There was a note on his desk.” Hannibal spoke calmly, inside was a different story. He was annoyed at himself for not seeing the signs sooner and having to tell Jack his failings. Not that anyone else noticed but Hannibal should have been paying more attention.

Jack let out a long sigh. Jack knew there was nothing he could do. “Right. Well call me when he comes round. I’ll sort out this end. Just tell him to get better.” Jack hung up. Hannibal

could tell he wasn't pleased, all the more fun for The Chesapeake Ripper to poke at him with.

Hannibal turned around to walk back inside. He looked at his watch. Nearly 11am. Alana would be here shortly, probably just as Will would be coming out of surgery. He took a seat in the waiting room, looking to the nurse's station he noticed the patient board. Will's name wasn't on it yet. So no not out of surgery. He was alone with his thoughts. He wondered how Will would be after this experience. Knowing Will he expected him to be upset and defensive. Just as he was going over the plans he was putting in place for Will, a door at the end of the corridor was opened and Will was being wheeled out. All his plans had to be put on hold now, but still he would try to use this experience to shape him further into the killer he knew him to be at heart.

Hannibal stood up and started to walk down towards the room that the attendants rolled him into, just as he was walking down rushed footsteps behind and someone shouting his name made him turn.

"Hannibal!" Alana was out of breath. Her eyes were red and she looked flushed. She had obviously been crying on the way over.

"Alana, they have just brought him out." He spoke as she caught up with him. Still walking towards the room where Will was taken.

"Oh thank god. Took me ages to get a parking space. I wanted to be here when he wakes up." She sounds upset. She obviously blames herself for not noticing the signs earlier.

Hannibal gave her a small smile. "I'm sure he could use the company." He was being sincere. It was going to be tough for a few days for Will while he was on the 72 hour hold.

She returned the watery smile, she looked on the verge of tears. They approached his room just as a nurse was walking out. "I'm sorry but unless your family you can't enter." She stated looking flustered.

"I'm his sister and this is his Psychiatrist." Alana piped up.

"Oh. I'm sorry no one told me he had family here."

"I just arrived." Alana stated. Lucky her appearance seemed to win the nurse over. "How is he?"

"He'll live." She said dispassionately. "He's going to be out for a while though. The drugs were in his system for a good hour the doctor thinks. He'll likely have a headache when he comes round as well, they pumped out a fair amount of alcohol. Does he normally drink a lot?" She asked looking at Alana.

"He likes to have two fingers before he goes to bed, but I've never known him to drink in the morning." She answered honestly.

Hannibal interjected. "How much longer is he likely to be unconscious?"

“That depends on how his body reacts to the drugs, could be a few hours or he could slip into a coma. We will have to wait and see but we should know soon.”

Alana just stared at an unconscious Will on his bed. She moved past the nurse and took a chair by his side and held his hand. Tears silently rolled down her cheeks.

Hannibal thanked the nurse and moved into the room. He stood next to Alana and watched Will’s vitals, counting the number of times his chest raised and fell. At least he was no longer intubated which was a good sign of him being able to breathe on his own. His vitals however were still on the lower end but he was showing signs of making a full recovery. No major damage done.

“Alana, I’m going to go grab some of Will’s clothes and books. Do you need anything while I’m out?” He asked politely while placing a hand on her shoulder to offer his support.

“No, no. I’m fine. I’m just going to stay here and watch him. As you said he needs a friendly face when he comes round.” She said looking up at Hannibal with a watery smile. At least there were no more tears running down her cheeks. Hannibal extended his handkerchief to her, she thanked him and dried her eyes and her cheeks. She went to hand it back but he held up a hand to stop her. “I’ll be back soon. Call me if there are any changes.” He said. He walked out the door and started to head for his Bentley.

Once inside the car he sat and thought about what Will would need. He started the engine and begun to make his way to Will’s for the second time today.

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He entered Will’s house. No dogs to greet him just quiet. A strange eerie sense he had not experienced at this house before. He walked over to the wardrobe. He picked up the bag on the floor and started putting some of the shirts that were hanging up. He walked over to the chest of draws and packed jeans and underwear.

He looked around and noticed the book case in the corner and packed some of the more used books. Obviously the ones that Will liked to read he thought. He also picked up the book on the night stand and a photo that Will has of his dogs their too.

Hannibal checks his watch, close to 1pm. One more stop to make on the way back. He smiles to himself and walks back to the car, bag in hand. He starts the car and loses himself a little in the music. It allows him to think more clearly without having to maintain the walls he has spent so long building to keep others out.

*

Hannibal is about to walk into Will’s room at the hospital when Alana comes racing out followed by shouting and screaming. Alana tears off down the corridor not looking back at Hannibal. “I didn’t want to be saved!” screams Will.

“Code grey. Code Grey!” A nurse is yelling and running into Will’s room followed by two orderly’s.

Oh Will, Hannibal thinks. He's not taking the news well at all. He approaches the door apprehensively and there is Will struggling to get out of the bed and the orderly's holding him down while the nurse is pulling out a syringe. "Let me fucking go!" Will is screaming and thrashing. "We can't do that Mr. Graham. You need to calm down." The nurse is clearly saying.

Will is still thrashing and screaming, he sees Hannibal by the door. "Why couldn't you just let me die! I don't want to be here anymore!" He screams at him with a string of curse words. Hannibal was a little taken aback. This was not exactly the reaction he was expecting.

"Right that's it Mr. Graham." One of the orderly's says as he increases his hold on Will and nods at the nurse. She approaches him and injects the syringe into the IV line that Will had obvisously been trying to rip out but failed too. Will struggles swearing and cursing at everyone in the room. It starts to die down and then he falls in a heap on the bed. The orderly's stand up and brush themselves off and look over at Hannibal. "He's a lively one!" he said jokingly.

"Where going to have to transfer him to the Psyche ward now. Before he causes anymore hassles. I want him strapped down so he doesn't hurt himself or anyone else if he decides to have another outburst when he comes round." The nurse says looking exhausted.

Will is limp and lifeless on the bed. The orderly's move his body so he's laying flat on his back. They disconnect the IV and monitors and start to wheel him out of the room. Hannibal moves out of the door way as he watches Will being carted past. Just as he looks up Alana has come back. She looks very upset and sill has tears running down her face from early. He notices the handkerchief he gave her earlier clutched in her right hand as she looks at Hannibal. Her voice is strained from the crying. "He said he didn't want to be brought back. That it was a mistake. He was going on about how the world would be a better place without him." She said as she started to break down.

Hannibal walked up and put an arm around her but she fell into his chest sobbing into his suit. "He'll come round. He's just upset and needs time." He says to her trying to comfort her. She sobs slowly into his suit. "Why don't we get a coffee. He will need us soon to be there for him. They've just transferred him." He speaks quietly to her trying to calm her down. She nods into the jacket and pulls away from him mumbling 'sorry'. He looks down at her and smiles, she smiles back at him but her eyes are still full of tears. They turn and start walking towards the café in the hospital.

Get out

Chapter Notes

> Have decided to keep it in Season 1 of the show. I think I can have a little bit more fun with Hannibal toying with Will's perception and state of mind.

Will tried to open his eyes but they were heavy. He had a throbbing head ache, worse than he usually had. He groaned in pain when someone called his name.

“Will?”

“Alana?” He answered.

“Hey, how are you feeling?” She asked. Her voice sounded strained. Sounded like she had been crying.

His eyes snapped open as the memories came rushing back. The alcohol, the pills, seeing Alana. Leaving the note making sure he took enough of each. Waking up before. Alana telling him Hannibal had found him passed out and saved him.

“No……. No no no no no no no!” He started in a small voice which increased with every word. He wasn’t paying attention to anything else.

“Will, you need to calm down. Do you remember where you are?” Hannibal spoke putting a hand on Will’s arm in an effort to try and ground him to this moment. Hannibal could see the memories of what he had done flicking through. The features of Will’s face contorting showing the failure he felt.

Will jerked his arm when he felt Hannibal touching him. Wait. Why he can’t he pull his arm away. He looked down and realized he was strapped down to the bed. Panic started to flood his system and he started to try and shake the restraints off.

“Get them off me!” He screamed.

“Will! You need to calm down.” Hannibal said raising his voice so that Will could hear him. Hannibal placed a hand on each arm and leaned over Will as he withered on the bed try to shake free of the restraints. “Your name is Will Graham. You’re in John Hopkins hospital. The time in 3:45pm” He spoke calmly to Will.

Will stopped withering. Chest heaving as he looked up at Hannibal’s calm features. He broke down. “Why?!” He said in a faint whisper. “Why couldn’t you let me be?” Alana started shaking in her seat, the tears returning to her face as she watched her friend admitting he did not want to be saved. He wanted to be left to die in peace.

“Because I am your friend Will.” Hannibal spoke calmly. His face showing no emotion as will gazed up at him.

“Get out.” He said as he started to raise his voice again. “Just get out both of you!”

Hannibal looked down upon Will. The defiant look he got back he was not expecting. Hannibal removed his arms and stood up straight as Will turned his head to try and look out the window. Alana stood up and with a shaky voice “Please… Will….. We want to help you-“

“I said both of you.” Will spoke quietly refusing to look at Alana.

She raised her hand to her mouth doing little to cover the quiet sob that escaped her lips. Tears ran down her cheek as she turned on her heels and left his room. He could hear her heels clicking as she walked out.

Hannibal was still there watching Will. Will just refused point blank to acknowledge his presence. He shut his eyes and tried to go somewhere else in his mind. Tried not to break down further in front of him.

Hannibal got the message. He turned and exited the room to go and check on Alana.

Will turned his head back to stare up at the ceiling. He hoped the nurse was coming soon to check on him. He couldn’t wait to get out of these restraints. But he knew he would have more problems to face in the days to come. He knew he was currently sitting in an involuntary psychiatric hold. He groaned as he looked down at his wrist and the IV lines that were going in. Great he thought to himself as he looked at them.

He was somewhat relieved when a female nurse walked in and smiled at him. “How are you feeling Mr. Graham?” She asked politely. She stood at the end of his bed reading his chart looking down on him.

He was getting sick of people looking down their nose at him today. “Constricted.” He answered her through gritted teeth. He was doing his best to try and remain calm in an effort to have the restraints removed.

She smiled apologetically at him. “Psychically how do you feel?” She asked in a warm tone of voice.

“I have a headache and my insides hurt. My stomach in particular.” He answered begrudgingly.

She nods her head and makes notes. “And how do you feel emotionally at the moment?” She asked apprehensively.

“As I said before. Constricted. I would like to be able to move so I can rest easier, as this position is quite painful.” He almost spat back at her. He knew his attitude was going to get him nowhere but he didn’t care. He just wanted to curl up on his side to ease the pain that

was starting to throb everywhere in his internal organs. He just wanted to be able to cuddle himself and be left alone.

“Yes. Your Psychiatrist said you wouldn’t appreciate being held down.” She replied as she walked over to the side of his bed and begun to undo the restraints holding his arms, then his legs and his waist.

He looked up at her, his face contorted in displeasure. “He’s not my Psychiatrist and he’s not my friend.” He turned away from her not wanting to talk anymore. He had enough of talking for today. No one understood what it was like for him.

The nurse watched him and understood the unspoken words. She turned to leave and paused just before exiting the door to catch a glimpse of his face. “The doctor will be along shortly to see you. I’m sure your well aware that you are being closely monitored Mr. Graham.” She spoke confidently looking him in the eye to make sure he acknowledged the hidden meaning. You try and off yourself in here and we’re all going to know and stop you he thought.

He shrugged his shoulders staring through the window making sure to not try and look her in the eye. She left and the door clicked shut behind her. At least he had some peace and quiet. Perfect. Left alone to reflect on your failings Graham. Plenty of time there’s a long list to go through. He exhaled loudly and shifted into a more comfortable position on the bed and closed his eyes.

He was standing in a stream wearing his gaiters, fishing rod in hand. He cast his line and started to slowly draw it in waiting for a rainbow trout to take his lure that was skimming along the surface. It was peaceful here and the sun was warm. A rustling in the bushes catches his attention. He looks up and over to his left. The raven feathered stag is standing there looking at him. Will stares back. It lowers it head as it trying to get a better glimpse of him. It snorts and startles Will who jumps back.

Sitting up in bed breathing hard. Argh. Pain. He doubles over in bed trying to slow his breathing.

“I’m sorry to have startled you Mr. Graham. I didn’t realize you were sleeping.” A kind voice. Will looks up and sees an Asian man in a white doctor’s coat, mid 30’s. He’s approaching him with a warm smile. “I’m Dr. Xen. I wanted to ask you a few questions. I believe the nurse informed you I was coming.” He looks at Will and waits for a reply.

Will is struggling to get his breath back under control as he watches Dr. Xen analyse him. Great.

You won’t like me when I’m psychoanalysed.

Will grunts in response. He doesn’t care anymore. He’s too tired. Just wants to be left alone to drown in a well of despair that he has created for himself. No. What he calls his life.

Dr. Xen moves to the end of Will’s bed and looks at his clip board. “Can I get you something for the pain Mr. Graham and perhaps we can talk later.” Smart. He knows he is not going to get anywhere with Will right now.

“Please.” Will hisses through his teeth. The pain is becoming stronger now than before. Suppose whatever they had given him before to try and manage had worn off.

Dr. Xen walks out of the room and comes back in less than a minute with a syringe. “This will help you.” He says quietly. He administers the syringe into his IV line.

Oh great, now he’s going to treat me like a child Will thinks. But the thought quickly disappears as the pain relief starts to wash over his body. He starts to relax and let it do his job.

He starts to relax too much. “What did you give me?” His voice asks higher and quicker than normal.

“It will help with the pain. It has a drowsy side effect to it.” He answers nonchalantly.

Will’s eyes widen. Dr. Xen notices “You don’t like medications that make you drowsy Mr. Graham.”

“No.” Will breathes but he can feel it working. He can’t get himself worked up. His limbs feel heavy and he’s having trouble keeping his eyes open.

“I’ll make a note here for you. I am sorry Mr. Graham. I was not aware of your preferences. Please try to rest and we will talk later.” Dr. Xen replies in that same cool demeanour.

Damn. Will wants to protest but everything is starting to seem like such an effort. He pulls the covers up over him a little further and closes his eyes. The darkness is welcoming. Pitch black. No lights. No sounds. Nothing there to haunt him. He’s asleep before Dr. Xen has even left the room.

Chapter 4

Will begins to stir. He's slightly sweaty but he's registers that he is lying on a rather hard mattress. Memories of the days event start to come forward. There a clatter to his left. He opens his eyes, his vision is a little blurry but he can make an outline out of someone in a blue top by the door. There a slight pain in his abdomen but the drugs are still in his system.

"Evening Mr. Graham. Would you like meat loaf or pork chops for dinner?" A female voice asks pleasantly.

Will brings a hand up to his face, rubbing his eyes and stifling a yawn while moving into a sitting position. When he looks back up she has shifted closer to his bed and is holding out two plates. He grudgingly points to the meat loaf with carrots and peas. It is a dismal sight. The woman pulls out a tray from the other side of the bed and sits it there for him to eat with only a plastic fork.

So you don't get ideas. Will thinks. He exhales loudly watching the woman leave and taking the dining cart with her to move to the next room. He looks up straight ahead. 7pm. He stares down at his food and picks up the fork, he cuts a piece of the meat loaf off and studies it for a minute. It looks dry and he's not even sure if it's actually any form of meat in it. He places it in his mouth and chews on it, certainly dry. As he chews he looks to his right, at least they left the plastic cup with water here for him. He pours himself some to help wash down his dinner. The woman arrives back at 7:30 to collect his plate and fork. As she approaches he notices her hands, there a little rough and there is a lighter ring mark were a wedding ring would have been worn. When she picks up the plate the fork drops onto Will's lap, he immediately picks it up. As he looks back up to hold it out to her he looks into her eyes for a second and she's that had been crying earlier, no doubt recently divorced caught the husband cheating which is why she is wearing the cross around her neck.

Will immediately looks down again, holding the fork out for her to take. She mutters "thanks" under her breath and leaves him alone.

He forces himself to sit up a bit more and moves the tray out of the way. He brings his knees up to his chest and rests his chin there watching the clock. He sits like that until it's nearly 8pm when there is a knock on his door. He looks over to see Dr. Xen smiling at the doorway.

"Glad to see your looking better Mr. Graham." He says as he moves over to his bedside and pulls up a chair.

Will eyes him cautiously then shifts his position to be able to better see Dr. Xen. He brings his knees down and back under the covers of the bed as the man produces a clip board with a questionnaire.

"I wanted to ask you some questions about what happened. Do you remember any details Mr. Graham?"

"I had a lot to drink, it's a little fuzzy." Will replied failing to make eye contact as usual.

“Do you normally drink early in the morning?”

“No.”

“Why did you drink on this particular morning then?” Dr. Xen asked but he could feel him trying to dig around.

“I lost track of time I suppose. I hadn’t slept that night. The whiskey bottle was still there and it seemed like a good idea at the time.” Will replied shrugging his shoulders. He was being non-descript as possible. Hoping that they would chalk it up as an accident but he had no idea how much they knew and if they had found the note that he had left.

“I see.”

Don’t patronize me Will thought.

“According to your medical records you suffer from insomnia. How have you been sleeping this past week?” He asked Will trying to look him in the eye, gauge if he was lying or not. Will didn’t have to.

“I don’t think sleep walking counts as actual time spent in bed resting, does it.”

“Do you sleep walk often?”

“Not really. But it has only recently started and the night mares make it hard on the other nights. It’s why I had the prescription.” He replied earnestly still hoping he could chalk it up as his brain being sleep deprived and losing count of the number of tablets. Hoping.

“Yes. You were lucky you had built a little tolerance to the tablets. Do you normally take them with alcohol. It is advertised not to be taken with them.”

“Yes, I find I sleep better and dreamless.”

Dr. Xen is scribbling something down. The fact that Will can’t see it and he is letting no emotion show in his face frustrates him. He shits his position again becoming more uncomfortable by the minute.

When Dr. Xen looks up he hands the clip board over. Will takes it raising his eyebrow minutely until he see’s the depression test. “If you could fill it out as honestly as you can for the last week.”

Will takes the pen that is offered to him and starts ticking boxes, not entirely truthful but enough to get him over the line. He hands it back and watching the doctor add up the numbers.

“Mildly depressed. Have you ever been diagnosed with depression or an anxiety disorder before Mr. Graham?”

“No.”

“Have you ever spoken to a doctor about these feelings or urges that you may have had before regarding suicide?”

“Never had urges before.” Will lied.

“I see. Have you spoken about your feelings of depression then with a psychologist?”

“I have talks with the doctor that was here earlier.” He said grudgingly.

“Yes. Dr. Lecter has informed me regarding your talks. He was also the man that found you and quite possibly saved your life. He mentioned that you had left a note out but he was unable to retrieve it as he followed you here in the ambulance.”

Will clenched his fists. The game was up. He wasn’t going home as soon as he thought. He took a deep breath in and out. He weighed the options he had left.

“I had a lot to drink, wasn’t thinking straight.” He concentrated on his breathing listening to Dr. Xen shift a little in his seat.

“No. Whiskey would not have helped your judgement at the time either.” The doctor replied somewhat sympathetically.

“So what now?” Will asked. He feared the worst. It did not help his situation that he had acted like an insolent child beforehand throwing a tantrum that would have been well documented.

“I have spoken to Dr. Lecter on that who informed me of your unique situation.”

Will looked at the man stunned into silence for a minute.

“He has offered to assist you with your depression and suicide attempt, confidentially.” Dr. Xen replied. “You are very lucky to have a friend who happens to be a Psychiatrist otherwise you would be on an involuntary lock down period of 72 hours.”

“He can’t do that.” Will replied looking shocked.

“He has already filled out the paper work Mr. Graham. I don’t know who his contacts are but it has all been approved. If what he says about you is true, it would be in your best interest to allow him to treat you.” Dr. Xen replied standing up and making his way to the exit.

“He will be arriving at 8:30pm to collect you and your belongings. You have fifteen minutes to get ready if you wish or I can bring in the forms for you to fill out if you wish to stay here?”

“Thank you. But I’ll get ready to leave now.” Will replied but couldn’t help the defeated voice he used.

“I wish you well Mr. Graham and hope I don’t see you anytime soon.” He said with a smile. He left the room shutting the door.

Will stared there for 5 minutes at the door unsure he had heard correctly. But he had. No involuntary hold. No he was being taken to Hannibal's house, the man that saved his life that he had just insulted. He couldn't suppress the shiver that ran down his back. But why was Hannibal doing this for him. Why?

The door opened and Will startled coming back to the present moment. He looked up and watched Hannibal entering the room with an overcoat draped over one arm in one of his elegant three piece suits. Will noticed his eyes narrowed slightly as he took in Will analysing him if he was going to protest. Hannibal's lips twitched up as he registered that Will was done fighting. For today anyway. "I did inform the staff I would be here at 8:30" He spoke.

Will dropped his gaze to the floor and mumbled "I'll be out in five." He didn't look up but heard Hannibal move out of the room. He got out of the bed and went to end of it. Sure enough at the bottom there was his duffle bag with some clothes of his in it. He picked it up and closed the curtain around the bed to change. He did so quickly and shoved the gown the hospital had given him unceremoniously back on the bed. He moved the curtain back again and made his way to the door.

He opened the door and looked down the hall towards the nurses station where Hannibal was sitting and waiting. He stood up when he saw Will exiting the room with his belongings and waited for him to join him. Will caught up and started walking straight for the elevators not even looking at Hannibal or registering his presence. Hannibal let out a small sigh and followed behind Will who was shoving the button trying to make the elevator hurry up.

Will didn't want to be here anymore in case they changed their minds. The sooner he got out the better. He tapped his foot impatiently while waiting and still shoving the button for the elevator. His pulse started to quicken and he was pulling more air into his lungs. The elevator arrived doors opening. He flung himself in and started pressing the ground floor button as Hannibal sauntered in behind him. Slowly in what seemed like an ice age to Will the doors slid shut and he felt the floor shift as they started heading down.

"Breathe Will." Hannibal's calm voice interrupted over his thoughts.

"I will once were out of here." He rasped. He brought a hand up and pinched the bridge of his nose wishing he had his glasses.

Hannibal said nothing else to him on the way down. Will was working himself up and any effort made on his part at the moment would only aggravate the situation. He watched Will jump as the elevator dinged and the doors slid open when they reached the ground floor. He set off on pace making a bee line straight for the front doors. Hannibal walked out calmly, as he approached the main doors to the outside he saw Will 30m away from the entrance standing there watching and waiting for him. Hannibal walked out to his car and Will followed behind as he had no idea where the doctor had parked.

Hannibal opened the boot of the Bentley and Will placed his luggage in the trunk as they got into the car. Once Will was in the passenger's seat buckled up, Hannibal started the car and turned to face Will holding out a box he had just produced from his pocket.

“Dr. Xen gave these to me. A pharmacy sample to see how you respond to them. They’ve shown to help reduce the symptoms.” He said giving Will a look that brokered for no argument.

Will took the box and look down at it. Anti-depressant’s. He should have seen this coming even if he was going back with Hannibal. He opened the box and popped a pill dry without saying a word.

Hannibal watched him. He knew he was going to be getting nowhere tonight. He had all of Will’s medication but he would not allow him to access them just yet. It would be foolish at the moment as Will was still in a delicate mindset however he planned to use it to his advantage while he could.

Hannibal reversed the Bentley out of the parking space and started to make his way home. The drive was silent and Will was leaning his head against the window staring out into the night.

Chapter 5

Hannibal parked the Bentley in the garage. He turned to face Will who was asleep leaning against the window of the car.

“Will”

“Mmm” Will jerked in his seat turning to face the source of his name.

Hannibal offered a small upward twitch of his lips then exited the car heading to the boot to retrieve Will’s belongings to bring inside. Will tumbled out of the car a little trying to stifle a yawn.

Will begrudgingly followed behind Hannibal, pausing in his hallway after he entered his house. He wasn’t sure where he would be staying but he watched Hannibal put his belongings near the door then saunter in the direction of the kitchen.

“I’ll fix you up something to eat. Hospital food is not the most appetising at the best of times.” Hannibal spoke.

Will noted his tone was less than pleased. He followed along contemplating if it was more to having to cook for someone late at night or the events of the day.

As he walked in to the kitchen Hannibal was already at the fridge pulling out ingredients and setting them on the island next to a chopping board. Will approached the island.

“Please have a seat Will.” Hannibal said indicating to the chair in the corner of the kitchen.

Will looked at Hannibal. The man’s features were stoic and he was radiating a sense of power, Will turned and sat in the seat indicated to him. He watched Hannibal begin to chop some of the ingredients he had brought out.

Of course he won’t let you near the knives his inner voice sneered. He focused his gaze onto the floor feeling childish.

“I’m sorry” Will spoke. He heard the sounds of the knife on the chopping block stop.

“For all the trouble I caused you today and Alana.” His focus shifted from the floor to the dining room area. Listening to the sigh that Hannibal exhaled from across the room.

Hannibal watched Will for a few seconds. He hadn’t expected an apology from him for a few days. He was not going to get off and away that easily though. He placed the knife down and placing his hands on the island to take the weight of his upper body as he considered Will and his apology.

“While I forgive you for your actions Will, I merely wish you had of asked for my help instead.”

Will turned to look in the direction of Hannibal but avoiding direct eye contact. The man was watching him intently, he could nearly feel the eyes boring into him trying to figure out what was going on in Will's head.

"I've never been any good at asking for help." Will replied.

Hannibal stood back up and turned his gaze cack to chopping up ingredients for the dinner. He was paying careful attention to Will's chosen words, posture and breathing. He knew it was too soon for the medication to be having any effect on him but maybe the day's events had drained Will emotionally and physically and as a consequence some of his defences were weaker.

Hannibal chose to be quiet, allowing Will space to breathe and take in everything that had happened. Hannibal had the upper hand in the conversation having known what Will responded to in their conversations.

Will sighed loudly and shuffled his position. Hannibal was a little disappointed to see Will's tell that he wasn't going to reveal anything more tonight than he already had. But it was a start.

"Perhaps you could be of assistance and set the table for me. Dinner should not take more than 15 minutes." Hannibal looked up at Will who had raised his head, he looked thankful for the distraction.

Will set to work and finished just as Hannibal was finishing frying some meat on the stove. He walked back into the kitchen retrieving a glass from the cupboard and filling it with water. He reached into his inside pocket for his aspirin. No bottle.

"You don't have any aspirin do you?" He asked looking at Hannibal plating their meal.

"I would avoid taking aspirin for a few days until your stomach has settled. I have something which will be just as effective which I can get in a minute." Hannibal replied while balancing the plates on his arms.

Hannibal walked out to the dining table setting down the meals. "I'll be back in minute please take a seat." He said to Will.

Hannibal walked out of the room to a bathroom and retrieved a small bottle of pills, he shook out two and made his way back into the dining room. He poured two glasses of wine before sitting at the table.

"These should help with the pain, they will make you drowsy but it safer than taking aspirin and risking an ulcer." Hannibal said placing the two pills in Will's hand.

Will looked up he went to open his mouth to protest but shut it quickly and mumbled a thank you. He was afraid if he denied any treatment Hannibal might offer he would be sent back and placed on a court ordered involuntary psychiatric hold. It meant more than just discomfort for a couple of days. It meant losing his job, his reputation which was already not in great form and he would not be able to bounce back from it.

Will picked up his glass of water and swallowed the pills. Hannibal smiled at him and he looked at his meal wishing for it to be finished already.

“What is it?” Will asked in a clipped sentence picking up his knife and fork.

“Veal Cordon Bleu….”

“Right.” Will said shoving a piece he had cut off into his mouth.

Hannibal cut into his own meal ignoring Will’s mood swing and rudeness. He was anticipating these reactions earlier.

They ate their meal in silence except for when Hannibal excused himself and cleared the plates away. As he was leaving the dining room he asked if Will wished for a small dessert. Will politely declined and mumbled about being tired.

Hannibal returned to the dining room. “I will show you to your room.” He set out into the foyer carrying Will’s bags up the stairs as the man followed behind him.

Will entered the guest room of Hannibal’s house. Noticed how it was just like most of his other rooms, well decorated and no expense spared. Hannibal set his luggage at the foot of the bed.

“I’ll leave you to get settled. I usually prepare breakfast at 7:30. Until tomorrow, good night.” He shut the door behind leaving Will in the room alone.

Will walked to the end of the bed and lifted the luggage onto it. He opened it up and begun to put a few of the items away in the wardrobe and bedside table. He put his toiletries in the bathroom placing them in the draws. He sighed as he noticed his razor missing. Most likely confiscated either at the hospital or by Hannibal himself.

Will noted that there were a few books on the desk in the corner of the room, as well as the books that were in his bags these were different. Something he normally wouldn’t read but he picked up the book looking it over. He knew it was Hannibal’s but he expected to see more books on Philosphy, Art or medical text books laying around. He tried to picture Hannibal reading Brokeback Mountain but he couldn’t picture it. Will had seen the movie and put the book back down on the desk. He decided to have a shower and call it a night.

As he strolls back from the ensuite after his shower and curls up into the bed. Will finds himself retrieving a magazine to read for the night. He flicks through settling on an article about the different type of personality’s involved in drug smuggling. As he finishes he switches off the light curling up on to his side silently praying for a night respite.

Chapter 6

The ground crunches beneath his feet. It's cold and pitch black. He can tell he is outside because of the cold, his breath turns white in front of him as he breathes in the cool still night air.

He looks up, there are no clouds, stars or even the moon. But the trees seem to shot upwards creating a canopy above him possibly he thinks.

A noise in the distance of cracking twigs. He turns his head in the direction he heard the noise.

"Hello?" Will shouts.

He hears running in the distance. He bolts towards the source of the noise, tree branches wiping his face and stumbling over the roots. He can hear whatever it is ahead of him running then pausing then moving forward again. It sounds injured.

He begins to catch up to the source. His eyes darting around, ears tuning in to pin point the location. He hears a soft moan. He slows down walking to where the noise is being emitted, cautiously walking to the base of a tree.

He trips on a root he cannot see and falls forward. He throws his arms out to break his fall and scrambles back up. He's covered in blood but there is not a mark on him no pain. He looks down and see's Abigail bleeding out on the floor of a kitchen.

"No!"

He runs forward to stop the bleeding on her neck. See is gasping for air looking to the corner. Will shifts his gaze seeing the body of Garret Jacob Hobbs, eyes boring into his soul. "See"

Will is standing in front of a mirror that reflects his whole body. He tilts his head but his reflection only smiles at him.

"Killing must feel good to God too. He does it all the time"

Will spins around to Hannibal's voice, the man is standing behind him in the darkness walking towards him.

He turns back to face the mirror. His reflection is smiling at him. But it's twisted with darkness. He punches the mirror. The whole mirror cracks and some of the pieces fall to the floor. He bends down picking up a piece in his hands. He cuts his finger on the shard watching the blood trickle down.

He looks up in the mirror at his reflection. It's still smiling but it also holds the shard. The reflection brings it up to his throat and slices across deeply as Hannibal steps in behind.

“And are we not created in his image.” Hannibal speaks looking at the real Will.

Will staggers backwards hands flying up to his own throat to stop the bleeding as he watches the mirror. His own reflection that betrays him is facing Hannibal, blood from his carotid artery pumps onto his pristine suit until they are both covered in blood. Then Hannibal produces a wine glass holding it to the artery, he swirls the contents before taking a sip and stepping out of the mirror to the Will who is backing away slowly. Mouth open in shock and horror at the site before him.

“Why deny your true nature.” Hannibal says before him taking another sip of the fine crimson liquid in his glass.

Will turns and bolts. He runs through the darkness. He falls colliding with a hard wooden floor, he scrambles upright but something pushes him to his knees in a kneeling position. He looks up into the face of the angel maker.

“I can help you”

Will screams in pain as he feels flaps of skin being lifted from his back into the form of wings. He tips his heard forward and winces as he feels something being poured over him. He looks up and sees the gasoline.

“The holy fire will cleanse you. In the name of the father, the spirit and the holy ghost…..”

He drops a match as Will is screaming. Flames engulf everything in his field of vision. It’s a bright light and he is still screaming.

No he’s not screaming someone else is screaming. He holds up his hand to shield himself from the fire, blinking and seeing a bright light. He feels something tugging at his shirt. He stumbles back a few steps.

“Can you hear me! Will!”

Will blinks as Hannibal’s face comes into focus. Everything starts to shift. He is outside. He doesn’t know where but there is a car in front of him. Hannibal’s car and it’s headlights. He realises Hannibal is still looking at him concerned but acknowledging that he is back in a conscious state of mind. Hannibal is wearing a robe and as his gaze shifts down he is only in his boxers and a shirt. Will takes a step forward.

“Jesus!” He howls in pain. His feet are killing him!

Hannibal does not ask, he scopes Will up in his arms and walks him to the car putting him in the passenger seat. Will sits there as Hannibal examines his feet. He is still processing. He looks at the dashboard. 2am. He remembers going to bed then the dream. He’s been sleep walking again. And it’s cold. He’s cold, he’s shivering.

As if Hannibal has read his mind he drapes his over coat onto Will. Will doesn’t acknowledge the gesture he just stares down at his feet and all the blood. His blood. How did he not feel it?

“The cuts are deep but no stitching is required.” Hannibal says looking at his feet.

Will slumps against the head rest. He can't focus. He shuts his eyes trying to think. He brings his hand upto his face, pinching the bridge of his nose and inhaling deeply. How did the car get so warm so quickly? He opens his eyes. He's in a bath tub.

He scrambles in the tub and Hannibal appears from the side.

"Easy Will. You have had an episode." His face and tone of voice is calm and soothing.

"What happened. I remember the car but how… how did I… did I get here." He says gesturing to the bathroom.

"It seems you passed out in the car. Either through physical exhaustion or pain from your feet."

"My feet?" Will said looking down. "What the!..." He starts looking at the water finally it is crimson.

Hands are placed on his shoulder to hold him still.

"Your cut your feet badly. I carried you inside and ran the bath to tend to your wounds." Hannibal said looking Will over.

"Wounds? You means there's more."

"Yes you have some scratches on your face, neck, arms and legs. It seems as though you ran through some hedges of sorts."

"That explains the dream." Will mumbles.

"What did you dream Will?"

"Oh no. Your not analysing my dreams."

"It might help you to talk about it…."

"I know Garret Jacob Hobbs is dead Dr. Lecter." Will retorted.

"Is this a dream that has been repeating itself Will?"

"Where was I?"

Hannibal looked Will over. He was being defensive, he had the answer he needed.

"You were about half a mile down the road. I gathered something wasn't right when I found the front door open and you were not in the house."

"Only half a mile."

Hannibal noted it sounded almost as a sigh of relief. He remembered the other time Will had turned up on his doorstep in the morning stating that officers had picked him up a few miles from his house in Wolf Trap.

“Yes. Yu were lucky you took one of my red wine bottles with you and dropped it on the foot path. I altered me to the direction you headed.”

“I’m sorry about the wine. I’ll buy you another.” Will said apologetically.

“No need. I consider it a favour. A colleague brought it as a Christmas present and I couldn’t bear to tell him it was not to my liking.” Hannibal said warmly.

Will smirked and relaxed into the bath water. “How much longer until I can get out?”

“You can finish now if you wish. There is towels on the table, if you want to put the robe on and sit on the toilet I will dress your feet in here and then help you to the bed.” Hannibal stood up and exited the bathroom shutting the door behind him.

Will sat up and reached for the plug. He sat up on the side of the bath and nearly fell in again in pure embarrassment. He was naked. Stark naked. He grabbed the towel and buried his face in it feeling humiliated and stupid as to why he had not realized this before.

‘He’s seen naked people all the time he used to be a surgeon’ Will thought to himself. He quickly towelled himself off and put on the clothes provided and the robe.

Just as he was shifting slowly onto the toilet Hannibal rapped on the door.

“Yeah come in”

The door opened and Hannibal walked in holding a tray with medical supplies. He sat it down on the basin and brought forward a small stool from the corner of the bathroom and placed one of Will’s feet onto it. He sat on the bath tub and began to dress the foot.

“You are quite lucky that the wine bottle you stood on shattered into little pieces. If they had of been bigger or on the heel you could have cut an artery.” Hannibal spoke softly.

Will shivered at the dream where his artery had been sliced by his reflection. Hannibal slipping on his blood from that wine glass. It was weird. He pushed it to the back of his mind something about coincidence and subconsciousness lingering around it. He didn’t want to pay attention to it.

Hannibal placed his foot on the floor and proceeded on the other one. Will noticed his whole foot was bandaged and thickly. Probably so he could walk on it as he would not be able to wear shoes for a while.

Hannibal finished with his other foot. He stood up moved the stool back to it’s orginal place and came back to stand near Will.

“I’m afraid I must insist upon carrying you up Will. Your feet will be quite painful and you should really not bear weight on them for a few days at least.”

“I’d rather try and walk.” Will said grudgingly.

“As you wish. I will assist you.”

Will placed both his feet on the ground and started to bear weight down on them. It was short lived however. Will huffed and nodded to Hannibal Who shifted him and carried him bridal style. He sat him on the edge of the guest bed and at least spared Will the dignity of getting in himself not making him feel like a total invalid. It was however shortly spared.

“For the night, in case nature calls.” Hannibal said placing a urinal bottle on the floor beside the bed.

Will wanted to say no, but he knew he couldn’t bare weight. He just wanted to sink under the covers from the humiliation. He didn’t dare ask about other bodily functions.

“Call me if you require anything. I’ll bring you breakfast in the morning. Please rest Will, don’t strain yourself. Good night.” Hannibal says by the door way.

“Good night Hannibal” Will replies.

Hannibal is shutting the door when. “Thank you” Will says. It is tinged with humiliation but it is honest and appreciative. Hannibal shuts the door and smiles to himself. He commits the image of a dazed confused Will to his memory palace. The drugs had there desired effect in bringing his dreams out in more vivid details.

Hannibal retired for the night looking forward to the next few days of Will convalescing in bed. Ripe for the seeds to be sewn.

Chapter 7

The light shone through the curtains spilling onto the bed waking Will to a new day.

He rolled over pulling the covers up in an effort to shield the light penetrating the room. He gave up admitting defeat and decided to start the day. He sat up and rested against the head board contemplating how he was going to achieve what he wanted.

There was no way in hell Will was about to use ‘the thing’ the doctor gave him last night. He pivoted on the bed and gently brought his feet down to the floor, he gingerly stood up. The pain was not as immediate as last night. He managed to hobble into the bathroom and relieve himself.

As he was hobbling back to the bed there was a knock on his door. He quickly scooted in under the covers before Hannibal entered the room holding a tray.

‘Good morning Will.’ He said walking up to the bed dressed impeccably already. He set the tray on the bedside table.

‘How are your feet feeling this morning?’ He enquired while drew a chair next to the bed.

‘Sore’ Will replied while tensing up as the doctor moved closer to him.

‘I would expect them to be quite sore for a few days yet. I do hope you are not trying to walk around’ He said indicating to the bathroom door that Will had left open.

‘I can walk on them well enough when I need to.’ Will retorted. He crossed his arms in front of his chest and looked out the window. He didn’t want to have this embarrassing conversation with Hannibal and his clinical detachment.

When Will looked back at the doctor he was surprised to see an amused expression on his face. He sighed to himself and looked over at the breakfast.

‘I’m not feeling hungry this morning.’ Will said eyeing the coffee and considering it would be about the only thing he would have right now.

‘Are you feeling nauseas?’ Hannibal enquired.

‘Yes. But I could make an exception for the coffee’

‘It is a side effect of the anti-depressants. It will take your body a week or two to adjust to the medication.’ Hannibal replied while producing the coffee for Will.

‘Thank you.’ Will replied as he took the warm cup in his hands. He took a sip and as always it was good. The rich aroma lingered on his tongue and he smiled to himself as he felt the warmth of the coffee trickle down his throat and his brain engaging.

When he looked up Hannibal was holding out his hands with two different pills in his palm. Will frowned at them.

‘Medication from the hospital and a pain killer for your feet.’ Hannibal replied watching Will closely.

Will took the pills and dry swallowed followed by a sip of coffee to wash it down.

‘Despite not feeling the best, it would still be wise to have something in your stomach with your medication. Can I convince you to try some of the breakfast or can I make you something plainer?’ Hannibal asked standing up and moving the chair back.

‘Since when have you ever seen me turn down your cooking?’ Will joked.

Hannibal brought the tray and handed it to Will.

‘It is a simple protein scramble. So it should not upset your stomach too much.’

Will picked up the fork and took a small bite. He chewed and swallowed, it didn’t seem to cause any further discomfort. He began to slowly eat the contents of the bowl but set it down half way through.

‘I really couldn’t eat anymore. I’m sorry, I know how you hate to waste food.’ Will said as he placed the bowl on the tray and handed it back to the doctor.

‘No apology necessary Will. I’m sorry to force you but I would hate to see you being set back.’ Hannibal retrieving the tray. He took two boxes from his pocket and set them on the bedside table.

‘The white box is the pain killers if you require anymore.’

‘You trust me around them?’ Will asked incredulously.

‘Should I not treat you like an adult Will, or is that what you were expecting?’ The doctor asked looking Will straight in the eye to gauge his response.

‘I… I just… didn’t think…. No…. I’m mean yes…..’ Will stuttered as Hannibal raised an eyebrow. ‘I mean no, I didn’t think you would do that.’ Will said looking up.

Hannibal considered him for a moment. Will looked back down cursing his own fumbling on the topic.

‘I have faith in you Will.’ Hannibal replied. He turned and left the room while Will just watched him wondering *why?*

The door shut and it shook Will out of the thought. He sighed and decided to flick back through his magazine. ‘Should have asked for a laptop while I had the opportunity’ he thought to himself.

It was going to be a few boring days of being bedridden.

*

The next three days passed pretty quickly. Will had asked later during the first day if he could have his laptop. Hannibal had informed him that he had not brought it from his house but had given Will his iPad to borrow. It kept Will entertained downloading books to read and following some new articles on forensics and psychology.

He was not however pleased with Hannibal's subtle attempts to try and engage him in conversations about why and what he was thinking on that morning. Nor the events at the hospital afterwards.

In truth Will didn't want to talk about it and show his feelings, despite Hannibal's reassuring words and even so far as to starting topics as to how times have changed. He was subtle and most people would not pick up, but Will wasn't most people. He knew the tricks and the games Hannibal was playing to source information, but Will wouldn't give him the satisfaction of anything.

He hadn't at least had a sleep walking incident since, but the dreams didn't fade away. He still woke up 2-3 times a night sheets wrapped around him and drenched in sweat. They weren't as vivid, but they were still dark and blood filled. His insomnia was slowly getting worse between the medication and not wanting to sleep because of the dreams.

On the Wednesday, Will was finally able to walk without cringing in pain. He still hobbled a little to avoid certain areas of his feet touching the floor, but he could manage to finally walk down stairs and sit at the table to participate in normal interaction.

On Thursday morning as Will had finished his breakfast he decided to talk to the doctor. He didn't know why, in fact he couldn't think much at all between the medication and the insomnia his defences where wearing thin.

'I…..' Will started and stopped feeling lost. He couldn't find the words he wanted to say. His mouth had dried.

Hannibal had looked up, he was watching Will searching. Curious as to what he had to say. He waited patiently knowing interrupting would only push the man away.

Will sighed. Stumbling over words was going to get him nowhere. He took a deep breath. 'I can't stand the dreams anymore. I don't want to look. But I can't stop… and….. I can't see a future for myself where I'm not dead.' He finished looking at Hannibal's coffee cup.

'In what way do you mean you can't see a future for yourself Will?'

'I don't know… It's….. There's nothing to hope for.'

'Can you not see a future you want to build for yourself?'

'I can see something I want, but it's something I can't have.' Will replied dropping his gaze. It burned him to admit it but he couldn't hold it back anymore. 'A family of strays is the closest I'll ever get.' He conceded.

Hannibal looked him over. ‘Do you believe this is because or your empathy?’

‘That and who wants someone who is borderline crazy.’ Will smiled comically.

‘I imagine it would be quite difficult to maintain a relationship with someone when you know exactly how their feeling.’ Hannibal replied.

‘It makes it good in a way, until your sitting there crying with them when they really want just a shoulder.’

Will relaxed a little. He breathed a little easier, appreciating being able to rid of himself of some of these things with someone who didn’t berate him for it.

‘How have you been sleeping Will.’ Hannibal didn’t need to ask, he knew the man had not been resting well from the noises he heard from the room and Will’s eyes having dark circles under them.

‘Worse actually.’ Will said bringing a hand to his forehead. His headaches were becoming more consist too the past two days now he thought about it.

‘How so.’

‘I think the medication is messing with my system. And the dreams are getti-‘ He stopped himself. Shit, he just let that slip.

‘How are the dreams affecting you Will?’ Hannibal asked patiently but Will felt his eyes watching him closely.

‘They’re just the same. They’re really no worse-‘

‘Have you dreamt about harming yourself Will.’ Hannibal cut in sensing a lie on the tip of Will’s tongue to avoid the subject entirely.

Will was silent and closing himself off. Hannibal read all he needed to.

‘I would like to try something with you tonight.’ Hannibal spoke confidently hands clasped in front of him.

Will looked at the man. Saw the psychiatrist side coming out in him, reassuring, positive, trying to offer hope where Will saw none.

‘It’s a mild form of hypnosis that has been shown to help prevent nightmares. I know you said that you have tried something similar, but this is a relatively new concept and I believe it could be helpful.’ Hannibal said.

‘Again I’m surprised I get a choice. I thought I was your patient now?’ Will replied.

‘Not officially. But yes, you are being offered the choice Will.’

Will looked over the doctor carefully, he knew he didn't really get a choice he would just be asked again later in a different way most likely. He shrugged his shoulders and muttered 'What have I got to lose. More sleep?!'

'Hopefully more to gain. We shall start at 9pm. It would be easier to perform it in the room. I will go through it in more detail tonight.' Hannibal said as he stood to clear the table.

Will sat there digesting the information. Considering what he had signed up for. Hell if he could possibly get a few hours he wouldn't mind, anything was better than the last couple of nights he had.

He stood up and hobbled into the study to finish reading his book. He sat down in the arm chair and started to mentally countdown the hours.

Chapter 8

Will was sitting in the bed leaning against the head board and the doona covering his legs. Hannibal was sitting next to him on his chair. He had brought a few things up with him and Will was looking suspiciously at them sitting there on the bedside table.

‘In order for this therapy to be as effective as possible Will, I will require you to also record your feeling throughout the day. When you are feeling particularly vulnerable or depressed and also when you are feeling positive.’ Hannibal said as he produced a leather bound book for Will and a pen.

‘I thought the anti-depressants were to keep me in the middle.’ Will asked inquisitively.

‘Indeed, however hyponotheraphy combined with cognitive behavious theraphy can achieve greater success in the subconscious mind.’ Hannibal said as he unbuttoned his suit. He set up the metronome and it started to swing and click.

‘I want you to lay down and relax for me Will. I want you to find a calming memory.’

Will shut his eyes, he wondered through his memories. Calming. Fishing.

He was standing in a stream, casting his fly fishing rod out. It was warm, the sun was out but it was still partly cloudly. It cast shadows around the landscape when Will looked around him.

‘Tell me what do you see?’ Hannibal’s voice cut in from somewhere. He realised he was still laying in the bed.

‘I’m fishing.’

‘He you visited this place before?’

‘Yes. When I was younger my father brought me up here.’

‘What do you see around you Will?’

Will looked around.

‘I’m standing in a river. The sun is out, there’s trees by the edge and……’

‘Will’

‘Something is watching me.’ Will said, his voice catching in his throat.

‘Who is watching you?’

‘I don’t know. I can’t see them.’

Will started walking closer. It was moving backwards from the river whatever it was. It had been watching him. Will started to run through the water, it sloshed around him.

'Will'

He ignored the voice and continued on. He fell into the water but when he resurfaced it was dark and – and…… He was in the forest again, but it was not as dark as before, he could see the ground. He could see the trial of blood. He starte following it his pace quickening and he saw the blood becoming thicker.

'Will!'

He didn't have time for the voice. He rounded a tree and found the body of Garret Jacob Hobbs staring back at him. "See" He whispered pointing. Will turned to where he was pointing. There he was standing there covered in blood. Arterial sprays coating his jacket and his face and he was holding a knife. He edged closer but it moved with him. He paused, he ran and collided with a mirror that shattered, he was standing there shaking looking down at the knife in his hands and the blood that he was drenched in but it wasn't his. He dropped the knife staggering backwards he spun around. Hannibal was there shaking him.

'*Will! Can you hear me!'*

Will blinked. He was panting and sitting upright? How did he manage to sit upright. Hannibal was in front of him staring into his eyes. Will turned away from the gaze.

'Sorry' He muttered.

'What happened Will?'

'I saw Garret Jacob Hobbs.' He admitted. It pained him to say it but the man was becoming an nuisance despite being dead.

'Garret Jacob Hobbs is dead. You killed-'

'I know I killed him. I emptied a clip into him!' Will shot back. He let out a moan and buried his face in his hands.

'This isn't helping.' He said looking at Hannibal.

'I will try a different method tomorrow but I think we will have to start building something more concrete for you.' Hannibal replied paying no attention to Will's rudeness.

'Here take these, they will at least help you too relax tonight.' Hannibal said offering out two blue pills Will recognised as sleeping tablets.

Will said nothing and took the tablets. Grateful for the escape it would hopefully provide.

'We will start therapy sessions in the morning after breakfast. That way it will enable you to practice throughout the day, and I recommend a different course tomorrow evening which may also assist. Good night Will.' Hannibal said as he stood to leave the room.

Will gave him a weak Good night back. He retrieved his book hoping the tablets kicked in soon, until then he would read until he couldn't think anymore.

*

'Will, your breakfast will be getting cold.'

'Whhaaaatttssssss' Will replied struggling to to make his limbs move into an upright position.

He managed to look up and Hannibal was standing in the door way amused. Will looked at the clock. It was 8:30

'Shit!'

'I normally don't tolerate such language in my house.' Hannibal said sternly.

'Sorry, I had no idea….. Wait why didn't my alarm go off?' Will asked looking at Hannibal.

'I found you sleeping through it earlier this morning. The tablets I gave you last night are a little stronger than what your used to and I believe being so exhausted it seems to have knocked you.'

Will brought a hand up puck his hair back and stumbled out of the bed towards the bathroom, mumbling 'Be there in 5' to Hannibal on the way past.

When in the bathroom, he splashed the cool water from the basin into his face. It helped a little, hopefully the coffee would pick him up. He walked back out and got dressed and made his way to the dining table. It was the usual affair, an elegant breakfast with decadent coffee as always.

He took a sip and let out an audible moan of pleasure. Hannibal sat there smirking behind his tablet. Will shot him a look. 'It just tastes better this morning.'

Will finished his breakfast and made to leave the table when Hannibal spoke.

'If you want to take a seat in the study I'll be in shortly.'

'What?' Will replied looking confused.

Hannibal looked him over. 'Do you remember our discussion last night about morning sessions?'

'Oh!' Will said nodding his head. 'Sorry. I uh… yeah.' He gestured upwards with his hands. Hannibal just continued to watch him and will waved his hand at him and left the room for the study. He knew what he meant he just couldn't find the words this morning. His mind was a fog. And Will was rather enjoying the sensation of not thinking as much for once.

He took his seat and stared at some of the paintings surrounding him. He didn't feel coherent enough for a book yet. Hannibal entered the room 5 minutes later and sat next to him in the adjoining armchair.

‘Do you remember what happened last night Will’ Hannibal spoke softly.

Will gazed into the empty fireplace before him and shook his head slowly shrugging his shoulders.

Hannibal pursed his lips. ‘I tried to place you under a mild hypnosis however you reacted quite-‘

‘Garret Jacob Hobbs’ Will breathed.

Hannibal inclined his head slightly. ‘What else do you remember’.

Will raked his brain. ‘A river, I was fishing. No. You were asking me to fish. Wait no I- What did you give me? It wasn’t sleeping pills’.

‘Yes and no. I gave you sedatives. You were having a panic attack when I was trying to hypnotise you’. Hannibal said in a clinical voice. ‘I wanted to try something different with you this morning in order to help you sleep better tonight. However it requires practice and patience on your part’.

Will nodded slowly not looking at Hannibal.

‘I want you to picture a place. Similar to last night but I need you to start developing this place during the day. I want you to start creating a room in which you feel safe and fill it with objects that remind you of safety or security. It is a form of the method of loci concept however we are using it solely for the purposes of creating a safe place’. Hannibal said.

‘Things don’t work out so well for me doing that’ Will retorted.

Hannibal paused and considered him for a moment.

‘Do you feel relaxed when you try to go to sleep Will’. He asked casually.

Will snorted. ‘Yes, I really enjoy going to sleep and to wake up screaming or out in the middle of the highway’. He sarcastically threw back.

‘Well I have an idea but I need to head out this afternoon. I would appreciate it if you came with me and I think you would actually enjoy it.’ Hannibal said eyeing Will with a small crinkle of a smirk in his eyes.

‘Fine. If I don’t get out of this house soon to stretch my legs I might start climbing walls.’ Will said as he stood up.

‘Please be ready to leave at 12. We can have lunch out if you wish.’ Hannibal said to Will’s back.

‘Right’ Will said as he looked at Hannibal from the door.

He went back to the guest room and pulled out a book to read. He didn’t want to keep going over the thoughts and memories from the night before. In truth he was getting annoyed with

Hannibal's continuous attempts to help him at the moment. He felt the need to be left alone in his misery again. He walked into the room shutting the door and sauntered over to the bathroom.

He ran himself a bath and stripped. It was nice to relax into the hot water, he felt as though it was taking away some of the pain and discomfort from inside. Not to mention it made his feet feel so much better. He sat there for a while and only noticed his fingers had begun to prune when he heard a knock on the door.

'In the bathroom' Will shouted. He heard the bedroom door open.

'I forgot to mention earlier, I would like to see how your feet are healing.' Hannibal's voice carried through the room.

'Give me 10 minutes Hannibal and I'll be out' Will shouted.

He heard the door click shut and pulled the plug out of the bath. He reached out for the towel and placed it around himself. He got out and sat on the toilet, he dried himself off and walked into the bedroom to retrieve his clothes.

He had just finished buttoning up his shirt when Hannibal knocked on the door again.

'Yeh' Will said paying more attention to the shirt which was starting to feel tight on him.

Hannibal entered the room carrying a silver tray with some medical supplies. He set it down next on the end of the bed and pulled up a chair.

'How are they feeling' he said not waiting for a reply from Will before picking up his foot and placing it in his lap and gazing at the wounds.

'Better. It doesn't hurt as much to walk on them' Will shrugged. 'They looking better from your end?'

Hannibal cocked his head 'Much'.

'I thought you would have been busy with patients during the week' Will asked curiously.

'It was lucky for you I had scheduled half of the week off for office renovations' Hannibal said as he applied ointment on Will's right foot.

Will hissed in pain. Hannibal hid the smirk and applied the bandage over the top and wrapped it.

'But I rescheduled y patients until week next. I would rather see you on the mend and your case is of greater concern to me' Hannibal said as he finished with Will's other foot.

Will didn't say anything, he couldn't. Not really. The man had gone out of his way to help him and wanted to see him get better.

'Are you still holding dinner next Sunday for thanks giving?' Will asked.

Hannibal looked up surprised. ‘I decided against it’.

‘Why?’ Will asked surprised.

‘It’s not really my tradition. Ms. Komoda had asked if I could as she loves attending my dinner parties however I felt-‘

‘I haven’t attended any of your parties yet’ Will piped up.

Hannibal paused. ‘No, I haven’t seen the pleasure of your company at any yet’.

‘I think it’s the least I can do after all you have helped me with’ Will said more to his feet than Hannibal.

However Hannibal understood this was Will’s way of saying thank you. He knew how much the man hated social events and even more the prestigious upper social circle of the opera community but Hannibal appreciated the kind genuine gesture. It was something he thought he wouldn’t see from Will, attending one of his dinner parties. A celebration of life and Hannibal’s achievements.

‘I would be honoured Will’ Hannibal said earnestly.

He earnt a small smile from Will. Hannibal moved the chair back into place and checked his watch.

‘I will change and then I should be ready to go. I will meet you at the car’ Hannibal said as he exited the room.

Will got up gingerly on his feet and went to the closet to retrieve his shoes. It took a bit of effort to find shoes that fitted and were comfortable but he settled for a pair of black lace up leather shoes he usually wore to formal functions. Probably fitting seeing as Hannibal would likely take hi to some fancy restaurant for lunch anyway.

He walked down to the garage and Hannibal was only a minute behind him. He was wearing a navy blue and red check 3 piece, fixing his cuff links as he walked to the car.

‘Ready’ He asked Will who politely nodded.

They sat in the car, Hannibal fussed with the CD player while he waited for the garage door to open and then backed out of the driveway.

It was at least a pleasant day and Will was glad he was able to see a change in scenery. Despite Hannibal’s house being filled with exquisite items he felt but of place and more in a museum. Unable to take the pieces for fear of breaking them or damaging the pieces items that were probably worth more than all his assets combined.

The drive was short and Hannibal had chosen French restaurant for lunch which made will breathe a little easier. At least he could make an informed choice of the cuisine and read the menu somewhat.

A Valet parked the Bentley and they were seated near the front window, it was a beautiful day at least but Will felt a pang of guilt sitting near the window.

Hannibal choose the wine, a rich red to match the soufflé Will had ordered. Hannibal chose a lamb dish that Will couldn't pronounce. Lunch was served promptly and Will enjoyed his, however he had to smirk at Hannibal a little. He would have thought the man would enjoy a meal or two away from his home however he didn't seem to savour the meal as he did with his own. They left shortly before 2, Hannibal stating in the car he had a few erins to run but wanted Will to enjoy his therapy time.

Will had tried find out what therapy Hannibal had signed him up for. All the doctor let on is that it was individual and relaxing. No talking was required. Well Will was stumped. He tried going through a mental list of things used to help improve sleep and depression and he could not think of anything close to what Hannibal was saying.

However when they pulled into a private day spa Will's jaw almost dropped.

'A day spa?!' He said incredulously to Hannibal.

'It can be very therapeutical Will' Hannibal said cocking his head a little.

Hannibal walked in front of Will and spoke to the receptionist. Will waited patiently somewhat still surprised. Hannibal walked back and gave Will a form to fill in for the reception and said he would be back around 5.

'What have you signed me up' Will said before Hannibal left.

'Acupuncture, reflexology and a full massage. Enjoying the finer things of life isn't just good wine and food, you need to take time and indulge in yourself.' Hannibal had said as he walked out the door.

Will was about to say something when a woman spoke to him.

'Are you Will Graham?' She asked politely.

'Yeah, but I ah-' Will started.

She laughed and flickered her blonde hair back. 'My name is Natalia, Dr. Lecter said you might be a little uncomfortable. Please follow me.' She said as she walked off into a private room.

Will followed and was led to a room which was dimly lit and the smell of incense filled his nostrils.

'Please strip and lay on the bed-' She said pointing to the table in the middle of the room.

'What' Will started.

She giggled a little. 'First time?'

‘Yeah’ Will said clenching his fist.

‘Just take off your clothes when I leave. I’ll be back in 5 minutes. Just put your clothes in the basket.’ She said as she exited the room.

Will walked up to the indicated basket and started stripping. Down to his jocks. He walked over to the bed and laid down looking up, it was weird. He grabbed a towel that was on a stoll next to him and covered himself a little.

Natalia walked back in and smirked a little.

‘Face down please Mr. Graham’ She spoke kindly and turned around to allow Will some privacy.

‘Just call me Will, there’s no need to be so formal.’

‘Ok Will, I’m going to start with some acupuncture today. If you feel any pain please let me know and I will stop’ She said.

‘Right. I’ve never had this before.’ Will said sounding uneasy.

‘Well just try to relax. This will help a lot. I think you will notice a definite improvement over the next week and after your next appointment.’

‘Next appointment?’ Will said surprisingly.

‘Yes, I have you booked in for a month.’

Will let out a low groan. He was going to have a talk to Hannibal about this.

‘Let’s begin’ The woman said and she put on some sort of soft melody and began burning a stick of incense over him.

*

Will walked out the front door. He felt loose and relaxed. He had actually admitted to himself he enjoyed it! He met Hannibal as he was driving in and sat in the car.

‘And?’ Hannibal said eyeing him casually as he sat down with a satisfied smile.

‘I think I actually enjoy this therapy’ Will replied.

Hannibal smiled warmly and drove off.

‘So how did you go?’ Will asked feeling more sociable for once.

‘It was rather boring but I found a new cabernet I wish to try soon.’

‘Sounds interesting.’ Will said.

Hannibal looked at him

‘What?’

‘You don’t normally engage in small talk and I think that is the first time you have actually been interested in my wine collection’ Hannibal said bemused.

‘Not everyone treats me to spa days. Your right though. I could do this on a weekly basis. I wonder how far the FBI stretches it’s therapeutical allowance.’ Will replied laughing at the end.

Hannibal laughed. ‘I don’t think the FBI would whole heartedly approve.’

Will laughed at that and relaxed in the seat.

Chapter 9

They were pulling into the driveway quicker than Will realised. He had talked to Hannibal during the half hour drive back, talking about his residency as a surgeon and what attracted him to move to Baltimore. Hannibal had been more than happy to discuss with him about it too. They set into the house, Will helped Hannibal with the groceries and stayed in the kitchen to help with dinner preparations.

Hannibal decided to push Will a little, into revealing a bit about his past. It was an effort to manipulate him further, to gain a better understanding of why Will had tried to take his own life, and how Hannibal could use this. He found in Will's current mood he would be more open and revealing building a repour with the man. But it had to be genuine, Will would detect a lie. He turned the current topic around, he would engage Will directly.

'I remember when I was young, being served these horrible breakfast dishes at my school. They were the most grotesque meals you could imagine. They somehow managed to burn porridge!' Hannibal chuckled.

'Yeah my school lunches were never the best. Either dad forgot or the school's kitchen served some type of gruel onto your plate'.

'I promised myself I would learn to cook better meals than I was ever served. Something I held onto and achieved. Did you cook with your father Will?'

'No. My father never had time to cook elaborate dinners. It was the basics. Did your parents teach you to cook?' Will replied curiously to Hannibal.

'I learnt to cook when I lived in France when I was 18 and started Medical school. My parents died when I was 10, I lived in an orphanage for 6 years, which happened to be our old castle, before living with my aunt and uncle. I was glad to be able to escape the orphanage. Not only for the memories it provided of my family but also for the bullies'. Hannibal said sorrowfully at the end.

He noticed Will had stopped chopping and was staring at him. Hannibal wasn't going to tell him everything, like that no one had the upper hand on him in the orphanage anyway, or that he had run away. He gave Will enough to have him come out a little.

'I know how it feels to be alone. I never knew my mother, but I can't imagine what it was like to have a family and then have it ripped away from you. The world is so cruel. I was always so jealous of the other kids, the way they were treated by their parents, having their lunches packed. It was something I was never really given when I was a child. Dad did the best he could, but the best was not much. I think he was upset, he would drink and tell me stories about how he had met mum and then when she left without a word. It always made me feel….. Different.' Will said. He finished his sentence and started chopping the carrots again in front of him. Paying close attention to not let the tears fall from his eyes.

‘I agree. The world is cruel at times, but as we grow older we can learn how to manipulate it to our advantage. I focused on my studies, it was my passion as is food. It brings me joy and peace. It helps me feel connected to the family I lost. Tell me Will, how do you feel connected to your family at times?’ Hannibal asked.

‘Apart from the alcohol’ Will half snorted amused.

Hannibal gave him a ‘I’m being serious’ and ‘I’m here to help you’ look at him. Will thought and licked his lips.

‘The fishing, being close to the water and the boats. It reminds me of the best of my father’ Will replied honestly.

‘And what about your mother’ Hannibal pushed a little. Will was tentative but he was rlaxed enough and comfortable that Hannibal felt confident asking him a question that would normally send the man running.

‘I don’t know, it doesn’t help not knowing her’ Will spoke softly.

‘When your father spoke of her what would he mention, what always made you smile’

Will thought back, mulling over the conversations he had long tried to forget. But they were still easy enough to assemble in front of him.

‘He said she would always play Lean on me’ Will remembered and Hannibal caught a smile flicker through his features at the memory. A genuine heart-warming smile from deep within him.

‘I used to listen to it as a kid. It always cheered me up’ Will said turning his face from Hannibal to wipe an unshed tear from his eye.

‘My mother introduced me to classical music when I was young, her favourites became mine. But her absolute was Goldberg variations. She would play it to my sister when she was a baby.’ Hannibal reminisced.

‘Music has so much power and influence for us, it can soothe us in ways words cannot’ He continued. Will was paying close attention to him. He nodded in agreement. ‘Would you like to pass me the carrots’

Will scooped the carrots into a bowl and walked over. Hannibal place them into the dutch oven on the stove.

‘It should be ready in an hour, in the meantime would you care for a drink. I think I could use one myself’ Hannibal said facing Will.

‘Yeh. I would enjoy that.’

They walked into the study. Will took a seat on the armchair in front of the fireplace.

‘What would you like Will?’ Hannibal asked after he put on some Beethoven to lighten the sombre mood that was starting to weigh down on them a little.

‘Got any Cognac?’

‘Chateau du Beaulon, it is a bit fruiter than your American brands but has a well balanced flavour. Very warming.’ Hannibal replied handing him a glass and pouring the amber liquid into it.

Hannibal poured a glass for himself and sat in the adjoining armchair.

‘Cheers’ Will said raising his glass in a toast.

Hannibal raised his own but said nothing to Will. Here merely toasted himself mentally, *to the process of natural selection.*

They sat quietly for a few minutes before Will turned to face Hannibal.

‘I would really like to see Alana’ Will said.

Hannibal inclined his head in acknowledgement and waited for Will to continue.

‘I…. I want to make it up to her, or well, at least show her I am trying to get better. I was thinking of inviting her out to a lunch or dinner if it suits you. On me of course, you’ve paid enough for me today!’ Will finished.

‘I assure you today was relatively inexpensive, as compared to the price of seeing something having benefitted you’ Hannibal smiled. ‘I am free all next week and this weekend if you wish to set the time and date with Alana, I would be more than happy to accommodate.’

‘A simple yes and thank you would have sufficed’ Will said smirking at Hannibal.

‘Would you care for another glass?’ Hannibal said standing to fill his own.

‘I’m allowed to drink on this medication?’ Will enquired.

‘Under the scrutiny of a health care professional, I don’t think another glass should cause you too much harm Mr. Graham’

‘Then may I please have another glass Dr. Lecter’ Will said stretching his glass towards Hannibal smirking.

Hannibal admired the site before him while pouring Will another glass. He sat in his chair and inhaled deeply. It was the first time he could recall that he didn’t scent fear ebbing from Will. No, this was more an intense smell of something else. Hannibal found himself questioning some decisions about the choices he was making now and for his future plans. But he would wait and see if this would hold up. But for now he would enjoy it. It was rather pleasant.

Shortly after they finished their second cognac the timer sounded in the kitchen and Hannibal excused himself to serve the dinner. Will stood and walked out to the dining table where Hannibal was already setting the plates. He took his usual seat and waited for Hannibal to finish the meal preparations.

‘Bon appetite’ Hannibal said when he had seated himself.

They finished their dinner quickly and Hannibal had dessert out within 5 minutes from clearing the dishes.

Will helped to clear the dishes for dessert and came back to collect the glasses. When he entered the kitchen Hannibal was elbow deep scrubbing the pots and plates from their cooking. He was surprised to see Will pick up a tea towel and begin to help dry the dishes and put them away. He watched Will in his peripheral vision, walking straighter and with more spring in his step. He seemed the happiest he had seen him ever. Hannibal felt his chest swell a little with pride at the accomplishment.

When they had finished they returned to the study, Will bringing the iPad out to read and Hannibal sitting on his harspicord composing a few tunes for his own amusement. Just after 11 they retired for the night.

Will entered his room but turned to face Hannibal looking him directly in the eye.

‘Thank you for today Hannibal. I… enjoyed it. I actually think things can… get easier’ Will said.

‘It was my pleasure Will. Good night’ Hannibal gave a curt nod and walked to his own room. He heard Will shut the door half a minute later.

Hannibal walked into his own room shutting the door. He walked to his smaller bookshelf where he kept some of his favourites and pulled out a book which he had been thinking about earlier. He retrieved his copy of The Symposium placing it on the bedside table. He stripped and showered, he dressed himself in his silk pyjamas and sat in his bed reading Plato’s words written centuries before hand.

Hannibal enjoyed the concepts Plato wrote about. Plato frequently wrote about rationality as a passion in which Hannibal had incorporated into his everyday life. But now this felt as though it was evolving further than he had thought it would go. He contemplated the words before him and shuffled his own feelings. Psychoanalysing himself and the unaccustomed changes he was experiencing. He closed the book and turned out the light. He thought back to his aunt and his sister, he relived the memories of the past in order to help him move forward.

He dreamed of his sister in a field, she ran up to greet him with wide open arms. He cuddled her and held her tight. They walked back to his aunt’s house where she greeted them and kissed them on the cheek. They were all sitting at a dining room table eating when there was a knock on the door his aunt and sister went and answered. They entered the dining room, walking in holding the hands of someone-

A shrill beeping woke Hannibal up from his dream. He hit the snooze button bring a hand up and brushing the hair from his face trying to recall any features of who had walked through the door. Who his aunt and sister had been holding. Who was it. He pushed the dream to the back of his mind, storing it to go through later at his leisure. It had been a while since had dreamed about them, and never together. Hannibal climbed out of bed to start the day. He had other items to think of currently.

End Notes

TBC Feel free to leave ideas in the comments. I have an idea for the next chapter but some input would be fantastic :)

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